

5

SANITARY RHYMES

FIRST SERIES.

- I. THE SKIN.
- II. THE BLOOD.
- III. THE NERVOUS SYSTEM.

SECOND SERIES.

- IV. EARTH.
- V. AIR.
- VI. WATER.
- VII. FIRE.



PRICE TWOPENCE.

TO THE FOUNDER OF
SANITARY LEGISLATION,
EDWIN CHADWICK, ESQ., C.B.,
These Rhymes
ARE DEDICATED BY
A FELLOW-WORKER IN THE SAME FIELD,—
THE AUTHOR.

SANITARY RHYMES.

BY

A. POWER, ESQ., C.B.

THE PRESENT SERIES CONSISTS OF

PERSONAL PRECAUTIONS AGAINST CHOLERA,

AND *RELIEFS OF FEVER;*



No. I.—THE SKIN.

No. II.—THE BLOOD.

No. III.—THE NERVOUS SYSTEM.

May be obtained from the Printer, price Sixpence (in Stamps or otherwise)
for Six Copies; or Five Copies, if free by post. No smaller number
will be sold.

London:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY

T. RICHARDS, 37, GREAT QUEEN STREET, W.C.

1871.

No. I.—THE SKIN.

THERE'S a skin without and a skin within,
 A covering skin and a lining skin ;
 But the skin within is the skin without
 Doubled inwards and earried completely throughout.

The palate, the nostrils, the windpipe and throat,
 Are all of them lined with this inner eoat ;
 Which through every part is made to extend—
 Lungs, liver, and bowels, from end to end.

The outside skin is a marvellous plan
 For exuding the dregs of the flesh of man ;
 While the inner extraets from the food and the air
 What is needed the waste in his flesh to repair.

While it goes well with the outside skin
 You may feel pretty sure all 's right within ;
 For if anything puts the inner skin out
 Of order it troubles the skin without.

The Doetor, you know, examines your tongue
 To see if your stomaeh or bowels are wrong ;
 If he feels that your hand is hot and dry,
 He is able to tell you the reason why.

Too much brandy, whiskey, or gin,
 Is apt to disorder the skin within ;
 While, if dirty or dry, the skin without
 Refuses to let the sweat come out.

Good people all ! have a eare of your skin,
 Both that without and that within ;
 To the first you'll give plenty of water and soap,
 To the last little else beside water, we'll hope !

But always be very particular where
 You get your water, your food, and your air ;
 For if these be tainted or render'd impure,
 It will have its effect on your blood—be sure !

The food which will ever for you be the best
 Is that you like most and can soonest digest ;
 All unripe fruit and decaying flesh
 Beware of, and fish that is not very fresh.

Your water, transparent and pure as you think it,
 Had better be filter'd and boil'd ere you drink it,
 Unless you know surely that nothing unsound
 Can have got to it over or under the ground.

But of all things the most I would have you beware
 Of breathing the poison of *once breathed* air ;
 When in bed, whether out or at home you may be,
 Always open your window and let it go free.

With clothing and exercise keep yourself warm,
 And change your clothes quickly if drench'd in a storm ;
 For a cold caught by chilling the outside skin
 Flies at once to the delicate lining within.

All you, who thus kindly take care of your skin,
 And attend to its wants without and within,
 Need never of Cholera feel any fears,
 And your skin may last you a hundred years !

No. II.—THE BLOOD.

Six thousand years after his era began
 The astonishing fact was discovered by man,
 That the blood in his body does not remain still,
 But rushes along like the race from a mill.

Certain vessels call'd arteries, hidden within
 The body, conduct from the heart to the skin ;
 While others called veins throughout every part
 Of the system conduct from the skin to the heart.

The heart every instant gets fill'd with new blood,
 Prepar'd, as you'll see, from the air and the food ;
 And this new blood is driven throughout the whole frame
 As from a force-pump by the force of the same.

The blood in its passage leaves everywhere
 Some of what it has got from the food and the air,
 Which is all taken up, ere a moment be gone,
 To replenish the tissue, the fat, and the bone.

Throughout the whole structure—bone, muscle, or skin—
 Where the arteries end the veins begin,
 And, changing its colour from red blood to black,
 The blood enters the veins and is so carried back.

When the old blood arrives by the veins at the heart,
 It is mixed and churned up, in a chamber apart,
 With a thick milky fluid, nutritious and good,
 Which the stomach and bowels have drawn from the food.

It is then driven off by a similar force
 To the lungs where the air-cells receive it, in course,
 Where at every breath it takes up through the skin
 The material parts of the air within.

Thus regenerate, vigorous, lusty, and red,
 And once more forced back on its fountain-head,
 To the artery-chamber it rushes amain,
 And is ready to start upon service again.

What we get from the air is equal in weight
 To what we derive from the food which we eat ;
 But what we breathe out, I must tell you once more,
 Is of poisons the worst, as I told you before.

In a much clearer light you now may perceive
 What it's hop'd you'll hold fast and devoutly believe,
 That for health and enjoyment the very best fare
 Is the soundest of food and the purest of air.

Then show that you value your blood and your skin,
 Remove every nuisance without or within ;
 Obey all the laws that are made to that end,
 And regard the Inspector of Health as your friend.

If your house has a taint, employ in good time
 Either Carbolic Acid or Chlorate of Lime ;
 But of all Disinfectants the Earth is the best—
 Smells cover'd by Earth are for ever at rest.

With all these precautions don't fear any harm,
 And yield to no panic or foolish alarm ;
 When the Enemy comes, be brave but prepared—
 Survey your defences and stand on your guard !

No. III.—THE NERVOUS SYSTEM.

I have told you about your Skin and your Blood,
 And, to keep them in health, what is needful and good ;
 And now I am taking in hand to explain
 To you, something concerning your Nerves and your Brain.

If the Blood be the life of the Body, you'll find
 That the Brain and the Nerves are the life of the Mind ;
 And that both these two lives are united in one,
 For if one of them ceases the other is gone.

As the blood-vessels all proceed from the Heart,
 So Nerves from the Brain traverse every part—
 Soft, white, pulpy fibres in substance the same
 As their source, though they differ in form and in name.

Mid our bogs and our mountains, whoever has stood
 On the dangerous brink of a quagmire of mud,
 Has observed how his step caus'd the quagmire to quake,
 Throughout its whole mass with a tremulous shake—

This familiar image sufficiently serves
 To denote the consistence and motion of Nerves ;
 For the least application of pressure or force
 Sets the Nerve in a tremble along its whole course.

These fibres so thickly pack under the skin,
 That you can't put between them the point of a pin,
 Which appears from it's sending a sharp thrill of pain,
 As by telegraph wire, to the seat of the brain.

Thus keenly alive, the whole surface throughout,
 To the contact of all kinds of matter without,
 Be it hard, be it soft, be it little or much,
 They convey to the Mind the sensation of Touch.

Vibrations of air and vibrations of light
 Occasion the Senses of Hearing and Sight,
 Through the ears and the eyes: tongue and nostrils as well
 Represent the two senses of Taste and of Smell.

It is this way Man learns what he's able to know,
 Of all things above and of all things below,
 Of Mankind, of himself, and the world all around,
 And whatever is over or under the ground.

These Nerves of Sensation are mov'd through the Skin,
 And so propagate Motion and action within ;
 But how motion and action proceed from the Brain,
 For the life that is in me, I could not explain :

Yet such is the truth ; not a muscle is stirr'd
 Nor a finger held up, nor articulate word
 Pronounc'd by the Tongue, which the Brain does not serve
 To excite and call forth by the force of a Nerve.

This power of the Brain is in language call'd Will,
 And its functional duty, all parts to fulfil
 Of the active or passive proceedings of Man,
 It performs through the Nerve-force, as long as it can.

But too long or too strong, or too frequent a strain
 Enfeebles the Nerves and o'erwearies the Brain ;
 And they sink, for a respite, as every one knows,
 Through a deep and sweet sleep, into perfect repose.

All the while there are Nerves which never know rest,
 And which act of themselves on the stomach and chest,
 For if these went to sleep the Heart could not beat,
 Nor the Lungs their respirative action repeat.

Thus the Nerves for nutrition depend on the Blood,
 And the Blood on the Nerves for its Air and its food,
 For without nervous action there could be no breath,
 Or digestion or pulse—in fact nothing but Death.

More than once I have told you (advice that was good),
 Have a care of your Skin, have a care of your Blood ;
 But again and again, and again and again,
 I say,—have a care of your Nerves and your Brain.

When the Body is weary with every-day toil,
 Or the Mind gets releas'd from its daily turmoil,
 There are those who (I speak not of you or of me)
 Smoke Tobacco and drink something stronger than Tea.

They say smoke soothes the Nerves and that punch plays its part
 In reviving the force of the pulse of the Heart ;
 And if moderately used before going to rest,
 They give time for the last of one's meals to digest.

Yet all must remember—yet all must confess,
 Such things are rank poison, and, us'd in excess,
 Travel quick to the Brain, and when once they are there
 That Pilot the Will is unable to Steer.

The drunkard must know, with his Skin full of drink,
 How his frame is unnerv'd and its energies sink ;
 For hence comes the stagger as homeward he reels,
 And the tremulous hand which the morning reveals.

Worst of all is the habit of some foolish folk,
 Who begin the day's business with tippling and smoke,
 Still soaking or smoking the man goes about,
 And seldom seems perfectly easy without.

This craving once caught never can be appeas'd,
 So his Nerves become palsied, his Brain gets diseas'd,
 Tobaceo and Spirits pervade his whole Trunk,
 And he's never quite sober, and never quite drunk.

Should the Cholera light on a temperate man,
 Cordials, opiates, and stimulants do what they can
 To keep up his strength and alleviate pain,
 Till the thick Blood be made to flow freely again.

On the Drunkard, alas ! from habitual use,
 These agents so slight an impression produce,
 To relieve his prostration and pain they want power,
 He is flung on his back and is dead in an hour.

But he who these prudent precautions observes,
 And attends to his Skin, to his Blood and his Nerves,
 The Cholera Demon may proudly defy,
 Look him full in the face and bid him stand by.

SECOND SERIES.

No. IV.—EARTH.

Taking care of the health of one's body, we find,
Is taking care, too, of the health of one's mind ;
And, herein, some advantage will surely be gained
If we learn how that body's made up and maintained.

Three-fourths of the bulk of man's body at best
Is but water ; from Earth and from Air comes the rest ;
While, within, a slow Fire, kept by fuel alive,
Enables the Driver the Engine to drive.

Salt only excepted, there's nothing of worth
Which man's body directly derives from the Earth ;
A mouthful of Earth is, if swallowed, no good,
Though abounding in atoms which constitute food.

Iron, phosphorus, sulphur, salts, potass, and lime,
Are sucked up by the plants, and in process of time
Turn to roots, stems and branches, leaves, seeds, grains and
Sole pasture of large populations of brutes. [fruits—

Such elements thus being formed into flesh,
Other brutes, brute-devouring, receive them afresh,
In the shape of raw meat ; which, digested as food,
Once more very readily turns into blood.

Man eats grain, roots, and herbs like an ox or a hog ;
Feeds on fruits like a bird ; devours flesh like a dog ;
And so takes from the soil what nutrition he wants
Indirectly through brutes, or directly from plants.

Of these two kinds of food each possesses enough
Both of heat-giving matter and flesh-forming stuff ;
But, water included, the meat, weight for weight,
Is richer than meal as eleven to eight.

Which is best of these foods will depend on the place
Where the man is to live, on his Climate and Race ;
In some Tropical countries prime beef bears no price,
Whole Nations subsisting on lentils and rice.

Oh ! Erin, prolific abode of mankind,
Good nurse of the body, good nurse of the mind,
How well dost thou fashion brain, muscle and bone,
Out of buttermilk, meal and potatoes alone !

Low down in the scale are the rude Esquimaux,
Who eight months out of twelve burrow under the snow ;
Vegetation to them scanty offers its treat—
Flesh, blubber and oil are the food which they eat.

Child of Europe ! the nursling of temperate climes,
Attend to the teachings conveyed in these rhymes ;
Eat seldom, eat slowly and masticate well,
That the food not too long in thy stomach may dwell.

Enjoying the pleasure good appetite brings,
In repairing that waste which from exercise springs,
Take meat just sufficient thy palate to please,
But live mainly on herbs, roots, bread, butter and cheese.

In great hunger use food from descriptions of grain
Which absorb the most water, yet solid remain ;
For these, though their scale of nutrition be less,
Fill the stomach and find there no room for excess.

Eating more than enough is not only a waste
Of the food, but a breach of good manners and taste,
Overcharges the blood, hurts the system throughout,
And creates indigestion, stone, gravel and gout.

Observe then, this Rule—throughout life and with least
Deviation—“ *Enough is as good as a Feast ;*”
For thus without help on your legs you shall stand
To the last ; and your days will be long in the land.

V.—AIR.

Time was—a long time before Adam had birth—
 When animals could not exist upon Earth ;
 The Plants then had plenty of light, heat and food,
 But the Air wanted power to vitalize Blood.

In the time, through which this world's mutations have ranged,
 The conditions of Air have essentially changed ;
 And the Plants which were once so gigantic in size
 Have been dwarf'd down to what we behold with our eyes.

In our coal-mines extended such depths underground
 The solidified growths of that period are found ;
 Light and heat were thus stor'd, on a provident plan,
 For the future convenience and comfort of Man.

Air, now, is a fluid all animals breathe,
 From the insect above to the worm underneath,
 And the deep-swimming fish, far remote from the sky,
 Without Air in its Water would instantly die.

To draw in a full breath is the work of about
 Two seconds of time, and the same to breathe out,
 But, before it comes back, the Air taken in
 Has been changed by its contact with Blood through the Skin.

The Skin I now speak of, adapted to line
 The inside of the Lungs, is a membrane so fine,
 To and fro through its texture it suffers to pass
 Components of Air by the learned called *Gas*.

Thus the Air in the course of the moment it dwells
 Diffus'd through the Lungs, in their millions of cells,
 Losing Oxygen Gas, in exchange, one may say,
 Receives Carbonic Acid and takes it away.

The use of these Gases will shortly transpire
 When we come to discourse upon Water and Fire ;
 Meanwhile—the Carbonic to Plants conveys food,
 But is poison if breath'd into animal Blood.

When people stay long pent up close in a room,
 Replac'ing what Oxygen Gas they consume
 With Carbonic, the Blood, which requires to be fed
 With Oxygen, gets the Carbonic instead.

Hencee alas ! comes the Typhus, our deadliest pest,
 That steals on its prey while securely at rest ;
 Hencee, chiefly, Consumption, that scourge of the Lung,
 Which so often the human nest robs of its young.

Prevention of Fever—beneficent phrase !
 How to do it our Statesmen seem still in a haze ;
 If they do mean to do it, I'll tell them a plan—
 Prevent Poverty, Ignorance, Crime, if you can.

There will always be very poor people, we know,
 But don't *you* have to answer for making them so ;
 To the rights and the duties of Labour give heed ;
 Promote self-reliance ; help only in need.

Let the people themselves understand how it comes
 That Consumption and Fever are rife in their homes ;
 The invisible Air make them clearly discern,
 And how they may breathe it in purity learn.

Abandon the fever-nests known in your town,
 Give more space in your street-ways by pulling them down ;
 Purchase acres outside ; build where workmen may dwell
 With their children and wives in a home, not a hell.

For these homes they'll pay rent ; but provide at the charge
 Of the public a building, capacious and large,
 Where men may resort for a lounge or a treat,
 And the sexes on festive occasions may meet.

But, of all things, let all men have part of each day
 For out-of-door exercise, study, or play ;
 Supply proper means of so using their time,
 And you'll keep them in health and in freedom from crime.

VI.—WATER.

Before that great change in the world came to pass
 When the Air gave its surplus of Carbonic Gas
 To the primeval plants, their appropriate food,
 And gained power to oxygenate animal blood—

Long, long before this there existed a time
 When the Sea in solution held mountains of lime,
 Wheresoe'er it lay over that crust of the Earth
 Which was solid before any being had birth.

A most wonderful creature now comes on the scene
 With a lime-loving stomach, the small *Coralline*,
 Pioneer of Creation, design'd to withdraw
 This obstruction to Nature's progressional law.

Long ages it rul'd the wide Ocean alone,
 Laying down an immense architecture of stone
 From the lime it devour'd ; and then cover'd with shell
 Other creatures began in the waters to dwell.

In the Ocean so cleared and subsiding begins
 A new race of beings with backbone and fins ;
 Of these primitive forms some remains may be found
 High and dry in the limestone which covers the ground.

Thus in Water you find the first medium of Life ;
 With which all the depths of the Sea are still rife ;
 And its tribes, great and small, may in number compare
 With those which now people the Earth and the Air.

Without water no creature could take in its food,
 Nor enjoy, nor digest it and turn it to blood :
 Everywhere in the body its presence is plain :
 It is eighty per cent. of the pulp of the Brain.

The goodness of Water depends on its source ;
 When pure it is bright and transparent of course :
 But its purity cannot be judg'd by the sight—
 Though impure, it may still be transparent and bright.

When trickling through Earth-pores it enters your well,
 What it keeps in solution no mortal can tell
 Without chemical tests ; for, if sewage be there,
 It will scarce give the nose any taint through the air.

Unsuspecting you drink of it day after day,
 Your spirits and strength slowly ebbing away,
 'Till a Fever as bad as from poisonous breath,
 Begins in your blood—and may end in your death.

Too happy, who dwells on the slope of a hill
 Expos'd to the breezes, blow which way they will,
 Near a spring welling up from a source underground
 Wherein trace of impurity cannot be found.

Clear as crystal and cold—pour it into the glass,
 And see how it bubbles and sparkles with Gas !
 When boil'd, soft as satin it feels to the skin,
 And leaves no deposit on iron or tin.

Such a treasure is sadly mis-spent upon land
 Where plenty of sewage is near at command ;
 Store it up and with conduit-pipes carry it down
 To wash-houses, kitchens, and baths in the Town.

For this blessing the townspeople gladly will pay ;
 And for taking their water, when done with, away ;
 This too must be saved for the profit it yields ;
 It will pay its expenses from fertilized fields.

If, constructing such works, we bring home to each door
 Good water alike for the rich and the poor,
 Wherever men are and whoever they be,
 From one danger to life we shall render them free.

VII.—FIRE.

In organic structures of every kind
 There is Hydrogen Gas with Carbon combin'd :
 And when these with the Air and its Oxygen meet
 Combustion develops Light, Vapour and Heat.

When we burn wood or coal to make warmth in a room,
 We must first with the match either substance illumine ;
 Then the Carbon at once and the Gases combine,
 And a blue flame commences to warm and to shine.

The Oxygen Gas with the help of this flame
 Evolves from the Carbon a third Gas, by name
 Known as Carbonic Acid, which, noxious to man,
 Escapes up the chimney or what way it can.

In man's body the process is similar quite,
 Except that combustion takes place without light,
 For the fats and the tissues deposited there
 Are burn'd by the Oxygen breath'd in the air.

This Fire when once kindled must never go out.
 Or the Engine would presently stop, beyond doubt ;
 And those muscles which move at the will of the Brain
 Could never be brought into action again.

The Bear in his cave and the Ants in their nest
 Remain torpid throughout the long winter, possess'd
 Of warmth without food, but, as fuel runs low,
 The Fires are bank'd up and the breathings are slow.

Whereas animals quick-breathing, active and strong,
 Cannot keep up the steam without food very long ;
 And the colder the weather the more they require
 To replenish the bunkers and heap on the Fire.

When muscles are mov'd they are mov'd at their cost,
 Since some of their substance in moving is lost,
 Dies away and is burned with the fat, forming part
 Of the fuel which warms the red stream from the Heart.

Ashes, Vapour and Gas, while this burning goes on,
 Are expelled from the system in more ways than one ;
 For this service the blood-vessels come into play,
 Taking refuse through various Organs away :

Thus the Blood when it visits the Lungs makes to pass
 Through the air-cells both Vapour and Carbonic Gas,
 In the Liver leaves bile, through the Kidneys excretes
 All the rest—and its purification completes.

Other parts of the refuse are cast out of doors
 By the skin, oozing forth through its millions of pores :
 Rest assur'd when these services fail to be done
 That your health is impair'd and disease has begun.

In this manner the flesh has no sooner decay'd
 Than repair of its tissue is instantly made ;
 So that motion and change wage continual strife
 With the frame—and herein lies the secret of Life.

The restorative process perform'd by new Blood
 Is maintained from two different classes of food ;
 Of each class many kinds are, for man, good to eat,
 And some help to make flesh and some help to make heat.

Of all flesh-forming foods far the richest is cheese ;
 Next comes meat ; and the substance of beans and of peas ;
 The best makers of heat are those which contain
 Oil, sugar or starch so abounding in grain.

In milk, when quite fresh from the udder, we find
 Both these nutritive forces together combin'd :
 Take away, to make butter, the cream if you will—
 All the flesh-making part's in the buttermilk still !

Understanding these things, wheresoever you dwell,
 You'll contrive to live wholesomely, cheaply and well.
 And here I shall bid you a final adieu—
 Long life to your wives, to your children and you !